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## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

### BOOKS OF ANCIENT HISTORY

*Per la Scienza dell' Antichità. Saggi e Polemiche.* By GAETANO DE SANCTIS. (Torino: Fratelli Bocca. 1909. Pp. xii, 531.)

*E, questo, un libro di battaglia.* For apart from three articles (I., II., VI.) and a lecture on *War and Peace in Antiquity*—all of which have been published already elsewhere—it contains simply criticisms and polemics. It falls into three main divisions. In the first De Sanctis appears as the champion of multiplicity of authorship for the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in the second as the advocate of a many-sided, as contrasted with an exclusively economic, interpretation of history, and in the third as the laudator of temperate criticism in the investigation of Roman history. And it cannot be denied, we think, that he appears favorably in each role.

In his Homeric controversies he deals urbanely yet incisively with the problems which are at present most in need of close consideration. He thus strengthens and defends the view that the repetitions, inconsistencies, contradictions, and inequalities of style and treatment which are manifest in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are best explained, in the first as defects occasioned by the addition of later elements to an original nucleus, in the second as the faults of a poetaster who combined in one poem two or more original epics. That is to say, he protects the present-day critical orthodoxy against Blass, who attributed the blemishes in the *Odyssey* to late interpolations, and against Fraccaroli, who in his notable work on *L'Irrazionale nella Letteratura* found no lapses in Homer more serious than those committed by other great writers.

The rest of the book gives us in America much to think about. We have been assured recently by a visiting German professor that the aversion of our scholars to everything polemical is not a mark of their innate politeness, or of their spirit of scientific detachment, but of their lack of real interest in their work; and he probably finds a confirmation of his diagnosis in the fact that his observations passed unnoticed. Be that as it may, to us, oftentimes, the judgments passed by German scholars upon one another seem harsh and uncharitable. Nor can we do aught but regret that the German manner has invaded Italy. The reviewer was struck in reading De Sanctis's *Storia dei Romani* by the freedom with which he inferred general incapacity from specific errors and misinterpretations. The reviewer did not find the criticism lacking in discrimination; but he thought it a trifle peremptory

and needlessly provocative. And provocative it certainly has been—of criticism not equally discerning, and much less courteous. In fact, De Sanctis's opening volumes have been assailed virulently by apparently every brand of writer in Italy. They emphatically did not deserve such treatment, and we believe that Italy must eventually endorse the favorable judgment of the scholars of the rest of the world; but up to the present they have drawn a continuous fire of dissent from socialists, jurists, dilettants, and historians. In the volume now under review De Sanctis replies to his critics. His knowledge of the ancient and modern literature of the subject is astonishingly wide and accurate, and he proves himself a dangerous controversialist. He writes with passion and he makes general and detailed charges of ignorance and incapacity against his assailants. With men like Ciccotti, De Marchi, Bonfante, and Ferrero he has easy work. It is simply a slaughter of the innocents. Nor can it be said that Pais proves invulnerable to his attack. No productive scholar could stand such fierce onslaughts; certainly not one so original and daring as Pais has been. To us it seems a matter of regret that the two men whose work has destroyed the clear supremacy of Germany in Roman history should be thus lacking in mutual respect.

W. S. FERGUSON.

*The Ancient Greek Historians (Harvard Lectures).* By J. B. BURY, Litt.D., LL.D., Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1909. Pp. x, 281.)

PROFESSOR BURY was well inspired in choosing the Greek historians for his theme. A good monograph on this subject has long been a desideratum. Professor Bury's book is extremely readable and very much up-to-date in the citation of the latest finds and discussion of the newest hypotheses. Much of his comment is of necessity common property. There is space to mention only a few of the more striking or novel suggestions. Something more than justice is done to Hecataeus of Miletus and great stress is laid on his Ionian rationalism and the largely conjectural indebtedness of Herodotus to him. The lost history of the *Sequel to the Reign of Darius* by Dionysius of Miletus is said to be the probable source of Herodotus's account of the Persian War. Into the framework of facts and dates thus supplied Herodotus wove the oral tradition of the Greeks and gave the whole an Athenian as opposed to an Ionian coloring. These books (vii.-ix.) were composed before his travels, and the architectonic unity and symmetry of the whole work, well brought out by the Alexandrian division into nine books, was achieved by an afterthought. Herodotus's work is more than a graciously garrulous epic narrative. It is a study in the history of civilization and a lesson in the unity of history though Herodotus does not himself formulate the idea. His philosophy and his rationalism, to which much space is given, are Ionian, not Athenian. "He